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HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS,
INCLUDING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES FOR IMPROVING
THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND
FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

Question of enforced or involuntary disappearances

Report of the Secretary-General

1. At its forty-ninth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 49/193 of 23 December 1994 entitled "Question of enforced or involuntary disappearances", in which it reiterated its invitation to all Governments to take appropriate legislative or other steps to prevent and suppress the practice of enforced disappearances, in keeping with the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances, and to take action to that end at the national and regional levels and in cooperation with the United Nations. It also encouraged States to provide concrete information on measures taken to give effect to the Declaration, as well as obstacles encountered, and requested all States to consider the possibility of disseminating the text of the Declaration in their respective national languages and to facilitate its dissemination in the national and local languages. In conclusion, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to keep it informed of the steps he takes to secure the widespread dissemination and promotion of the Declaration and to submit to it at its fifty-first session a report on the steps taken to implement the resolution.

2. In conformity with General Assembly resolution 49/193, the Department of Public Information has distributed Fact Sheet No. 6 concerning enforced or involuntary disappearances, published by the Centre for Human Rights, and which contains the full text of the Declaration. It is also in the process of publishing a booklet on the Declaration which is to be distributed to, among others, United Nations peacekeeping offices and United Nations specialized agencies. In addition, the Department's Visitors' Services Section makes the



Declaration available to the general public and educational institutes upon request. The text of the Declaration is also available on the Internet under the section on General Assembly resolutions. The Department's Development and Human Rights Section also distributes copies of the Declaration upon request.

3. In the field, United Nations information centres and services and United Nations offices are provided with copies of publications containing the Declaration, which they keep in their reference libraries for consultation by interested students, researchers and academicians. They also distribute copies to media and non-governmental organizations and at special events such as the annual celebration of Human Rights Day.

4. For the remainder of the current biennium, the Department plans to issue a special backgrounder on the question of enforced disappearances. Every opportunity will be used to promote the elements of the Declaration in briefings and events dealing with the United Nations and human rights, both at Headquarters and through United Nations information centres and services.

5. The field offices of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights have also actively distributed the Declaration to local non-governmental organizations and other interested parties. The Declaration is also part of the training projects on the administration of justice that are being developed in the framework of the human rights's advisory services, technical assistance and information programme.
